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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/796,216 | 03/09/2004 | Ben Penner | TTC-13702/08 | 2719 |
| 63796 | 7590 | 10/06/2006 | EXAMINER | |
| GIFFORD, KRASS, GROH, SPRINKLE, ANDERSON & CITKOWSKI, P.C. P.O. BOX 7021 TROY, MI 48007-7021 | | | ILAN, RUTH | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 3616 | |

DATE MAILED: 10/06/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. 10/796,216 | Applicant(s) PENNER ET AL. | |
| | Examiner Ruth Ilan | Art Unit 3616 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 July 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 11 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 3-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Drawings

1. The drawings were received on 7/13/06. These drawings are approved.
1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, and 3-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Okuyama (US 5,037,130.) Okuyama teaches an occupant restraint mechanism disposed between a rigid member (7) and an instrument panel including first and second brackets (5) extending between proximal ends fixedly secured to the rigid member (at 11) and distal ends coupled to the instrument panel (3). As seen in Figure 5, Okuyama teaches a concave notch (29) formed that allows for a predetermined amount of deformation. The notch is formed in at least one of the outer walls. As seen in Figure 5, the brackets are U-shaped, with a web. The notch is formed in an open edge of the wall and is concave toward the web. Also, as seen in Figure 5, the bracket extends arcuately. Regarding claim 1, as amended the notch extends through a portion of the generally parallel side wall (as seen in Figure 5, there is space between the bottom of the notch and the bottom of the side wall, more easily seen in the side wall closer to the top of the page.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Art Unit: 3616

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Okuyama (US 5,037,130) in view of Witkovsky (US 5,456,494.) Okuyama et al. is discussed above, and for those elements not previously discussed, additionally teaches that an end wall (see Figure 2a – bent portion flush with element 3, and fixed by machine screws, (see col. 2, lines 45-47, hence inherently having apertures.) Regarding claim 10, both of the brackets are positioned in the vicinity of the occupant's knees.) Okuyama fails to teach a flange formed at the proximal end to facilitate welding to the rigid member. Witkovsky teaches a bracket that is welded to a rigid member. The bracket includes a flange (at 10.) which is helpful in providing a weld surface. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention, to include a flange at the weld joint of Okuyama, as taught by Witkovsky, in order to provide a weld connection with sufficient surface area to provide a strong joint.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claim 11 is allowed.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments filed 7/13/06 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. The Applicant argues that the notch of Okuyama extends through the entire

Art Unit: 3616

height of the wall. The Examiner respectfully disagrees, there is clearly space at the bottom of the notch, between the bottom of the notch and the bottom of the wall.

Conclusion

7. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth Ilan whose telephone number is 571-272-6673. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

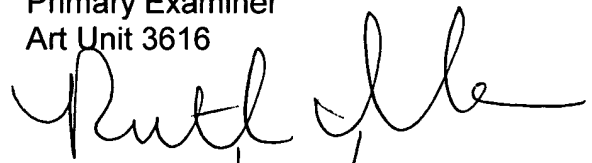
If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3616

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

RI

Ruth Ilan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3616



9/29/06